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General Studies-1

MoU to promote Krishna Circuit

The PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) and the Indian Yoga Association (IYA) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) today to facilitate interaction and cooperation between the two organisations to promote wellness, spiritual and cultural tourism in the Krishna Circuit.

The two organisations have joined hands to provide a holistic tourism experience to domestic and international travellers looking for some spiritually invigorating and cultural experiences.

Twelve destinations have been identified for development under Krishna circuit namely Dwarka (Gujarat), Nathdwara, Jaipur & Sikar (Rajasthan), Kurukshetra (Haryana), Mathura, Vrindavan, Gokul, Barsana, Nandgaon & Govardhan (Uttar Pradesh) and Puri (Odisha) under Swadesh Darshan Scheme..

About Swadesh Darshan Scheme:

The Tourism Ministry had launched 'Swadesh Darshan' scheme with an objective to develop theme-based tourist circuits in the country. These tourist circuits will be developed on the principles of high tourist value, competitiveness and sustainability in an integrated manner.

Features of Swadesh Darshan Scheme:

- The scheme is 100% centrally funded for the project components undertaken for public funding.
- To leverage the voluntary funding available for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives of Central Public Sector Undertakings and corporate sector.
- Funding of individual project will vary from state to state and will be finalised on the basis of detailed project reports prepared by PMC (Programme Management Consultant).
- A National Steering Committee (NSC) will be constituted with Minister in charge of M/O Tourism as Chairman, to steer the mission objectives and vision of the scheme.
- A Mission Directorate headed by the Member Secretary, NSC as a nodal officer will help in identification of projects in consultation with the States/ UTs governments and other stake holders.



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- PMC will be a national level consultant to be appointed by the Mission Directorate.

General Studies-2

Gobar-Dhan Yojana Launched

Union Minister for Drinking Water and Sanitation, Sushri Uma Bharti, today launched the GOBAR (Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources - DHAN) scheme at the National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI) Auditorium, Karnal in the presence of the Chief Minister of Haryana, Shri Manohar Lal Khattar.

What is the GOBAR-Dhan Yojana?

The Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan (GOBAR-DHAN) scheme was first announced by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley during his budget speech on February 1. The scheme would focus on managing and converting cattle dung and solid waste in farms to compost, biogas and bio-CNG. It will help in keeping the village clean while increasing the income of farmers and cattle herders

Aims:

The scheme aims to positively impact village cleanliness and generate wealth and energy from cattle and organic waste.

The scheme also aims at creating new rural livelihood opportunities and enhancing income for farmers and other rural people.

Under GObar-Dhan, cooking gas would be provided to rural habitations and technical support would ensure that the schemes functioned on a sustainable basis.

Benefits of the scheme:

- This is hugely helpful for the country as India is home to the highest cattle population in the world, close to 300 million in number, with a daily output of 3 million tonnes of dung.
- The Scheme will encourage the farmers to consider dung and other waste not just as a waste but as a source of income.
- It will provide many benefits to the rural people. It will be easier to keep the village clean and sanitized, livestock health will improve and farm yields will increase.



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- Biogas generation will increase self-reliance in energy utilized for cooking and lighting.
- Farmers and cattle herders will be helped in augmenting their income. There will be novel opportunities for newer jobs linked to waste collection, transportation, biogas sales etc.
- The scheme also provides a stable fuel supply in the market for oil companies and accessible credit in the market through government schemes and banks for entrepreneurs.

About ODF-Plus:

The Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) comprises two main components for creating clean villages – creating open defecation free (ODF) villages and managing solid and liquid waste in villages.

With over 3.5 lakh villages, 374 districts and 16 States/UTs of the country being declared ODF, the stage is set for ODF-plus activities, including measures to enhance solid and liquid waste management.

The GOBAR-DHAN scheme, with its focus on keeping villages clean, increasing the income of rural households, and generation of energy from cattle waste, is an important element of this ODF-plus strategy.

The scheme envisages the implementation of 700 bio-gas units in different states of the country in 2018-19.

Swachh Bharat Summer Internship Launched

Following the Prime Minister's clarion call on 2nd October 2014 for each individual to devote at least 100 hours to Swachhata through the year, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MDWS) in association with Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) and Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS) has launched the Swachh Bharat Summer Internship – a novel and first of its kind initiative.

About the Internship:

Under the internship, all interns who complete at least 100 hours of sanitation related work in villages would be given a Swachh Bharat certificate.



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Those who complete the internship with additional, specified outputs would also gain 2 curriculum credits specially allowed by UGC.

Additionally, top performers would receive awards at the College and University / District (NYKS), State and National Level.

General Studies-3

100% Electrification Achieved:

Leisang in Manipur has become the last village to be added to the national power grid under the Rural Electrification Scheme.

Definition of Electrification:

The government is not considering modifying the current, much-criticised definition of an electrified village, which counts a village as electrified if at least 10% of its households have an electricity connection, according to a senior official in the Ministry of Power.

According to the definition, in place since October 1997, a village is deemed to be electrified if basic infrastructure such as a distribution transformer and distribution lines are in place in the inhabited locality, electricity is provided to public places like schools, panchayat office, health centres, dispensaries, community centres, and at least 10% of the households in the village are electrified.

"As of today in India, the rural household electrification is about 83%.

From State to State, it ranges from 47% to 100%, but on average about 83% of households are electrified.

SAUBHAGYA Scheme:

The government had in September 2017 launched the Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (Saubhagya), aimed at covering the last-mile connectivity of taking electricity to the household level.

The target for the scheme is March 31, 2019.

According to data from the Ministry of Power and the Central Electricity Authority, so far 84.3% of households have been electrified.



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The Saubhagya scheme defines the electrification of a household as including a service line cable, energy meter, and single point wiring.

For unelectrified households in remote areas, electrification will involve the provision of power packs of 200 to 300 W (with battery bank) with a maximum of 5 LED lights, 1 DC Fan, and 1 DC power plug.

15% of the villages so far electrified have been done so using off-grid solutions such as solar, while the remaining 85% are connected to the grid.